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The Song of Brotherhood

And Other Verses

The Song of Brotherhood. And Other Verses

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MDCCCXCVI

"Cast by all earth's delights,
For very love: through weary days and nights,
Abide thou, striving howsoe'er in vain,
The inmost love of one more heart to gain."

MORRIS

CONTENTS

APOLOGIA

To him whose blood flows through my veins
  My songs I bring—
To him who left me wealth of joys and
    pains,
Life's losses and her gains,
  The love of song and the desire to sing.

Alas, no longer singeth he!
  But when his life
Sank down and vanished in the mighty sea
Of being, came to me
  Some subtle whisperings with meaning
    rife.

How should my ears be fit to hear
And understand?
I see as one sees blurred light through a tear,
In strife of hope and fear
When death and life stand close on either hand.

A voice, like sweep of summer rain
That passes swift,
Sighs to me: "Sing of Love and sing of Pain,"
But sighs to me in vain,
Who lack his thought, his heart, his spirit-gift.

From him who sang "The Goal of Time"
I hear sweet words,
And scrawl gnarled imitations into rhyme,
Because I cannot climb
The clouds like him whose voice was as a bird's.

The thoughts too high to catch and hold
  Pass by and go
Into the vast unseen. Am I too bold,
To mar his words of gold
  With stammering lips and accents harsh and
    low?

Will not men take these broken things,
  These faded flowers,
And laugh to scorn the idle boor who sings
His witless rhymes and flings
  Abroad these mangled shreds from other
    hours?

Will they not sneer and say: "The fool
  Would have us think
His words sublime, and he a sage to school
The world with canting rule;
  He gives us channel dregs as wine to
    drink?"

The perfect blossoms of my dreams
  Look not so fair
When light from flaring tapers on them gleams,
Nor are they sweet, meseems,
  Without his soulful presence, anywhere.

But as the wind, that passeth by
  And comes no more,
Brings scents from lands beneath a summer sky,
Yea, even so may I
  Bring some faint strain from him who sang
    before.

THE SONG OF BROTHERHOOD

A

THE SONG OF BROTHERHOOD

"Unfinished," say ye? Ay, the story ends
Only with life.

THE portals of the west were draped with gold
And sheen of crimson; and above, the blue,
Down-deepening to green and purple, told
Of Day's retiring; when a merry crew
Of men and maidens sat upon the grass
Within the entrance to a mountain pass.

And scattered in confusion all around
There lay the relics of a rural feast.
A dying fire crept closer to the ground
With cooling heart, and prayed to be
released,

And sent its curls of incense slowly wreathing
Upon the last sweet sighs the day was
breathing.

In front, the glowing splendour of the past;
Behind, the frowning gloom of gorge and
glen—
The home of Night, whence she emerged and
cast
Her sleepy poppy in the eyes of men;
About our feet, the joy of grass and fern,
Lulled fast to rest by croonings of a burn.

And careless jest and laugh ran round and
sought
Ledges of moss, and crevices where drops
Of icy water oozed, and echoes caught
The gladsome sounds, and bore them to the
tops

Of craggy dells, and left them there to die
Or wander with the wind that whispered by.

But as we sat there came a sound of song,
  A sound that seemed to tell of Nature's
    gladness,
Of rhythmic chants and pæans, that belong
  Of right to wind-swept wilds; yet notes of
    sadness
Seemed still to lurk behind. We could not
    hear
The words, nor did the singer yet appear.

Yet silence fell upon us, like the chill
  Of winter flowing through an open door;
All gazed into each other's eyes as still
  As graven stone. And now the breezes
    bore

Some scattered syllables, that grew more clear,
Until these words fell perfect on the ear :—

"Nay, who am I, that I wail and cry,
And wrestle with hate and longing ?
Fair friends for me in the sea and sky
And here on the earth are thronging ;
With heart of stone
Have I walked alone,
The claim of my kindred wronging.

"Each blade of grass, wherever I pass,
Is a friend that is glad to greet me ;
The stream as clear as a sheet of glass
Flows over the pebbles to meet me ;
In winter days
I've the cheerful blaze
Of a brotherly sun to heat me.

"At dead of night, from their awful height,
Gaze down, with a stillness tender,
The stars, my brothers of love and light,
That fanciful dreams engender.
All one are we,
Star, insect or tree—
The oak and the harebell slender."

And then a man came striding o'er the rise,
And stood before us, and the sunset's glow
Shone on his face and nestled in his eyes,
But on his face dark furrows seemed to show
The record of a bygone strife with fears
And fancies, and his cheeks were wet with tears.

One, with a touch of scorn, said: "You are merry!"
At which he laughed, and said: "See here,
my friends,
Is there not love enough on earth to bury
All sadness—love enough to make amends

For all the darkness, pain and misery?
Yet these shall tremble at Love's face, and flee:

"For Love is King! For him the wild bird sings;
For him the budding flowers burst and bloom;
Its best for him each living wonder brings;
For him the fire-fly flickers in the gloom.
Love bids us live as brothers, and shall we
Reject the only road to liberty?

"The old law saith 'that thou shalt love thy neighbour
As thou dost love thyself'—ay, even so!
To love him *is* to love thyself; to labour
In his behalf, what is it but to sow
The seed of which thyself shalt reap the harvest?
In helping him 'tis thine own fate thou carvest.

"Ay, all things are in all! All things are one!
Scent, colour, shape and sound are different forms
Of one same thing; from the all-seeing sun,
The light he sheds, the heat with which he warms
His child the earth, are one; and something winds
About all things, and all together binds.

"But till ye see all this ye cannot live.
There is no life in walking on the earth,
Thinking yourselves its lords. Nothing ye give
Without the hope of better. From your birth
You struggle each with each, and try to smother
The love which should be shed upon your brother!

"What life is this! To hoard the ancient lies
That made your fathers weep; to bow and pray
To blood-smeared idols, careless of the cries
Of bleeding victims; careless that decay
Hath seized upon your gods, and spiders run
Across their faces, on the webs they've spun.

"Men, men, what life is this! A worn-out creed
Is yours; you clothe yourselves in filthy rags,
The swaddling-clothes of bygone thought; you feed
On offal; and you march beneath the flags
Of Tyranny and robed Injustice; nay,
You hide your eyes and swear it is not day!"

He paused with flashing eyes, and some one said
"Poor fellow!" and another: "Is this glen
The home of madmen?" and a silent dread
Descended, till one spake: "He hateth men;

He is a cynic!" and another hissed:
"He hateth *God*, he is an *atheist*."

"Having light, loving darkness rather," sneered
a youth
Around whose hollow head rang Gordon's
song.
"Let's go and leave him; in the name of truth
Stay here no longer; we have stayed too long
Already," said a pallid, pious ape
Of manliness—a clod in human shape.

And HE stood stricken to the heart—as they,
In scornful hate and wonder, went—a grand,
A noble figure, and I longed to say
Some word of hope; I took him by the hand,
We trod the dark ravine, and scaled the height
Together—and the hill-tops glowed with light.

FOR A WOMAN

FOR A WOMAN

Yes, I! Don't touch the bell—I'll not be long,
But you left the blind up—may I put it
down?—
And I saw the light and you. So I came in
Just for a few last words, no high-flown stuff
Or whining either; sit still just a moment;
I'll take this side of the table. But the light
Dazzles my eyes—there! Now I'm comfortable.
I'm going to speak (no beating about the bush)
About what's happened, but I warn you now
To say not a word against my wife.——Why
not?
"What's in a name?" Six months will alter
that.

Let's see the story as the papers have it!
You are the injured husband—please, sit still,
And put on your old Stoic mask; I must
Say what I have to say; you keep me longer—
In every way you were a model husband,
Spending your time at home, kind to your wife,
Over-indulgent maybe, but that fault
Brought its own punishment. Here I come in,
The faithless friend, taking a base advantage
Of the trust you placed in me, a lustful wretch,
Treacherous—no name bad enough for me!
What they say of her I'll not drag out for you
To glory in. She was a woman, and better
Than either of us . . . . Stop! one word's
enough!
Remember now she's not your wife, but mine.
But I respect your feelings. False to you?
Say true to love!
This vulgar talk of the street
Is true, in a way, from end to end. And now

Sweep off the fly-blown surface-scum, and I'll
show you
What lies beneath; not in my own defence,
But to shake you in your self-complacency
Into some knowledge of her wrongs—not
yours—
To be a mirror to you.
I was her friend
At first, before I knew you. Then you came
And she loved you, not for what you were, of
course,
But for the soul she shadowed for herself
And throned in you. And you, I suppose,
were flattered
By her discernment. And my part in this
Was used against me at the trial, because
I did what I could to help her to her wish,
Without her knowledge mostly; was your
friend,
And in a thousand little ways contrived

To bring you two together. I was wrong.
Late, now, to see it. But her love of you
Suddenly made me know myself; I loved her!
And all these "far-fetched schemes" of mine
were just
So many secret parings of my heart.
Irony, isn't it?
You married her,
If it is marriage when a cold, self-centred
And analytic nature links itself
By a formal tie to a soul of youth and longing
And passionate love of life and all it means.
You never yielded anything, but lived
The same old way, letting her have her will,
But hardly caring what that will might be,
And never joining in her hopes or fears
Or pleasures. So her pleasures died. And she,
Chilled to the heart, withered and pined. I came

Often to see you—put it that way—saw
Her disillusionment; and heard you talk
Of monkeys and amœbæ, when you deigned
To open your lips at all, regarding her
As something lower than those same amœbæ,—
I judge by the attention paid to each—
While you, no doubt, stood in the van of things,
The topmost blossom of the tree of life,
The end of evolution! You had trained
Your intellect, and pryed into the secrets
That do no good when they are known, until
The lower life had been transcended, and you
Were a perfect man—or as near as possible—
Holding the scales of reason. So you starved
The woman's glorious, sympathetic soul,
As there you pondered on your marble pillar
And studied earth-worms. And she found in me,
Although she hardly knew it, what you denied,

And I was glad to serve her. At that time
I had no thought of wronging you, and she
Was always pure—is now! But I worshipped
her
In silence and without a hope.
Time passed,
Till I grew mad with passion; she held out,
Although she found, too late for a retreat,
The meaning of it all. But I was helpless,
Swept from my feet by a vast flood of flame
And hurried on, whether I would or no,
Into a world where common ties of earth
Were all forgotten, and my love of her
Was the one thing existent, all-pervading,
Resistless passion.
Why should I tell you
What your refined and well-poised intellect
Can never comprehend. You sat there, blind
As an owl in the daylight; busied yourself
with mud

And pointed out the pricelessness of science
In most grandiloquent phrases.
In the end,
When she had yielded to her nature, and you—
I needn't dwell on that! Then you were angry
In your calm, passionless way, to think that she
Should value you so lightly, and that I
Should not be able to recognise the worth
Of such a friend.
I don't disguise my faults
Or palliate them, but I know them. You
Are worse than I, because you are ignorant,
And that's the foulest crime on earth. Good night!

ABSENCE

ABSENCE

Flow swifter, swifter, weary days,
  Adown the slopes of time!
    Dance, dance along
    With jocund song,
And carol in my lady's praise
  Your silver-sounding rime!

Blow, wind, across the foaming sea
  And make the waves rejoice!
    And bow the trees,
    O wilful breeze,
To catch her tones and bring to me
  An echo of her voice!

But sadly in the chilling wind
The wailing branches sway;
No joyous note
Can ever float
While wintry spells the season bind
And she is far away.

THE SUNRISE

THE SUNRISE

A Love Song

Prelude—The Quickening of Day.

October's roses are all faded now,
  And with carnations full of languid scent
Imperial Summer wreathes her amorous brow,
  But I am wrapt in precious discontent,
For Love has bound me fast, I know not how,
  As I fled, heeding not the way I went,
Through free wild woods, and I am forced to bow
  To her who taught me what my being meant.

I thought my hovering fancy might have strayed
Bee-like from flower to flower, but here's an end
To all my erring thoughts; I never knew
The swiftness of the fire with which I played—
Last month I laughed with you as friend with friend,
But now I have another name for you.

I. Morning Light.

Why should a man call Fancy to his aid
To sing the beauties of our mother earth
And all the joy thereof, the endless mirth
Tempered with sadness, when the sky above
And earth below, with various sheen and shade,
Are coloured with the myriad rays of love?

Truth, naked as the statue of a god,
And fairer than the finest fancy wrought
In living shape by men who clad their thought
With reverence, of old, when ecstasy
Of beauty dwelt with every man that trod,
Truth, Truth and Love, befriend and speak for me!

Go to my fair-haired love, and whisper low
The endless song, vibrating through the whole
Of life, and echoing music to my soul
By day and night till all the air around
Is sweeter than the sweetest flowers that blow,
And all the world is thrilling to the sound.

Whisper it softly, softly, as the fall
Of thistle-down astray within the room;
Sigh it at eve within the sheltering gloom

When she is musing lonely and apart,
That she may sit quite still and hear it all
As though it were the beating of her heart.

Let it steal on her as a summer dawn
Steals upon cloudless heavens till the night
Draws back, and hill and dale, aflush with light,
Ring loud with quivering songs of many a bird,
And golden splendour lies on every lawn:
Let her not know she hears, till she hath heard.

I saw her yesterday, stood face to face,
And drank the voice whose tones are more to me
Than all the variant music of the sea—

The "countless laughter," the despairing cry,
The wrath and headstrong frenzy at the base
Of age-worn crags, and strange love-longing sigh.

And I must coldly stand as though she were
Only a woman among women—she,
Queen of my heart!—yes, I must stand and see
Her perfect form and all her ways that seem
To claim due love, as though she were not there,
As though I saw her image in a dream.

Or rather, Fortune proves herself more kind
In visions, for I dreamed of some strange land
Where she and I sat close, and her right hand

Lay on my shoulder, and her left hand lay
In mine with fingers trustfully entwined—
Such Fortune flies before the light of day.

I bowed my head and looked into her eyes
And then our lips met clinging in a kiss—
What waking hour, O Love, will give me this?
Yet all my spirit unto hers is bent
In homage, for I know that she is wise;
Whatever be her will, I am content.

II. The Heights of Joy

I laugh, I laugh alone, to think of this—
That I may see you often, breathe the air
That gathers round you, sit and see you there
Shedding unconscious light upon my life;
I laugh, for nothing now can come amiss;
My soul is up in arms for any strife.

O, Love, Love, Love! the world is fair indeed
And beauty dwells in every nook of it,
But till our souls with love's own light are lit
We cannot see what heritage is ours,
The glory crowning every simple weed
Resplendent as the crown of choicest flowers.

Till then, we only see the shows of things,
And doubt the goodness of the rhythmic power
That still throbs on, controlling shine or shower,
And think that life is blown from bad to worse;
We cannot hear God's message, though it rings
Like marvellous music down the Universe.

Upon the farthest twinkling point of space,
As far as thought can leap from world to world,
There cannot be a creature who has, furled
Within his heart, such cause of joy as I,
As I sit here and look upon your face
For which a man might be content to die.

Had you no more, I'd fall and worship you
As men of old before a carven stone,
But in your breast, as on an orient throne,
Sits Sweetness clad in robes of perfect white:
You are God's messenger and must be true
For shapes of evil shrink before your sight.

III. The Flower of Life

Surely I've loved you for a long, long time,
Yea, since the power of love first dawned in me,
For I have sought you half-unconsciously,

And walked like one in sleep, and hardly
knew
My quest less shadowy than a dream sublime,
Until I woke to find the dream was true.

My life is yours by right, not deed of gift;
I do not hold it in my hand and say:
"I give you this to guard or throw away!"
No longer do I yield to every breath,
Upon the sluggish sea of self adrift,
For you have weaned me from my love of
Death.

A word of scorn from you were as a knife
Thrust home by hate with longing still
unsated,—
Be pitiful to what you have created!
Like the dark god—whom aged Faith
immures
In fleshly corse—you breathed the breath of life
Into my nostrils, Love, and I am yours.

To love you is to be above the reach
  Of envy! Is there aught that can destroy
  The everlasting wealth of golden joy
    Of your unworthy servant? What am I,
That I should hear the music of your speech,
    As sweet as summer rain to meadows dry?

Yet, though I were the meanest clod on earth,
  A mere waste whim of Nature and a thing
  Past all contempt, even then my love-longing
    Would set me higher; and I am well content
That this my little sum of human worth
    Should bow itself to your arbitrament.

IV. With the Elizabethans

My books have gained in value for your sake,
  For though I rather care to lie and think
  Of you as last I saw you, and to link

My fancies each to each, O Love of mine,
Yet, when I read, fresh feeling seems to make
Fresh worlds of meaning lurk in every line.

My love is wealth-bestowing: I turn again
With doubled pleasure to my friends of old,
To walk in Shakespeare's labyrinth manifold
And Marlowe's thunderous palaces of cloud,
I linger long in Lodge's lyric lane,
And roam at large among the meaner crowd.

And if they speak of beauty, then I see
A shadowed face, afloat upon the leaf,
With honest eyes, and fair above belief,
Like some bright scene reflected in a stream;
And so the letters blur, and happily
I glide upon the current of a dream.

There is a hint of you in every word
In which they tell of maids beyond compare,
As sweet as budding springtide, and as fair
As summer nights; and yet it's but a trace
Of what I know, because they never heard
Your voice, dear heart, nor saw you face to face.

Why, if I had the mind of one of these
And my own heart, my passion and his power,
My songs should dazzle heaven like a shower
Of blazing meteors, strong words winged with flame,
The world would stand amazed, and every breeze
Would carry endless echoes of your name.

V. The Lighting of the World

Whether my days be spent in calm or storm,
'Tis well for me, dear teacher!—this I know,
That as the uncertain seasons come and go
We still move on to no uncertain goal.
Though myriad seeming evils buzz and swarm,
Laugh fear to scorn and stand erect in soul!

You cannot trust the tidings, yet I say
From you I learned them, dear—ay, love, from you—
I looked into your eyes, and straight I knew
Despair was dead to whom I once was thrall,
Had melted into air or fled away
Self-vanquished, finding Love is All-in-All.

Long time I'd hoped and flung my hopes in rime,
Striving in vain to hide the secret rout
Of fierce temptation urging me to doubt
The value of my visions; I would rave
Of night shot through with dawn, but many a time
I longed for sleep's last benison in the grave.

But then you came, I loved, and I was free,
And life broke forth in music while I faced
God's light; I'd sought in a Cimmerian waste
Of misty gorges for the glorious sun;
I hoped no longer now for victory,
Because I knew the victory was won.

You cannot trust the tidings? You of all,
That teach the sun his duty? You whose feet
Make earth flame forth in grass and blossoms, sweet
As those of Aidenn? Lo, the perfect morn
Waits on you! Listen for Love's waking call,
And laugh the leering face of doubt to scorn.

THE STREET

THE STREET

An outcast from the world of those who
stand
Proud, virtuous, self-centred, statuesque
On spotless pedestals, to those who love
And see God here and now you cannot be
An outcast from the world.

I look into your eyes and pierce the bold
Unflinching film of laughter hung by vice
To screen the flickering flame that burns
beyond;
But, sister, for the certain sign of God
I look into your eyes.

I take you by the hand, and I forget
The flaunting rags, coarse lips, defiant air,
The form which sin has moulded, and the voice
That pleads for custom in the filthy street;
I take you by the hand.

Fate makes us what we are; within us all
Are possibilities of good and ill,
But there are higher heights and deeper deeps
Than ever man has soared or fallen to.
Fate makes us what we are.

Who knows the end? Not we, who struggle here
Just time enough to wonder what we are,
And vanish like the bubbles in a creek:
The doubtful doom of praise or blame He gives
Who knows the end—not we!

We stand here face to face, and in the street
I claim equality with you by right
Of that humanity we share, and both
Are better on this flaring night because
We stand here face to face.

LOVE'S INVITATION

LOVE'S INVITATION

SEIZE on the present, for the past is dead,
And all the future looms with stormy sky
Livid and rumbling, and the dark is nigh—
The terrors of a night when overhead
The crash of thunder weighs the heart with dread,
And ceaseless lightnings snake-like writhe and fly
About the lift, and all the meadows lie
Sodden with streaming rain, and love hath fled.

Forget the future; let the present shake
Its petals round us in the sunshine here!
Forget old pain and taste new joy
instead!
For one brief moment, live for love's own sake
In careless pleasure, free from hope and
fear:
Seize on the present, for the past is
dead!

KIT MARLOWE

KIT MARLOWE

Because, three hundred years ago to-day,
  A spirit that dull custom could not tame—
  A soul of fire that had no part in shame,
Nor recked what babbling tongues of men might say,
But trod its wild and self-elected way
  Fearless, and left the rest to love and fame—
  Sprang from unworthy earth like leaping flame
But left a name that envy cannot slay;

Therefore we meet, strange mixture of divine
And human, to do honour to your shade;
Prince of Bohemia, scôp whose lips have made
Our English verse like draughts of fiery wine;
Our godlike brother, you whose words have been
Fierce joy to us, be with us, though unseen.

1st June, 1893.

TO OLIVE SCHREINER

TO OLIVE SCHREINER

From the land of listless summer, sob of
breeze and hum of bee,
Where the sunbeams gleam and glitter on the
bosom of the sea,
Comes a message, Olive Schreiner, comes a cry
of thanks to thee.

Daughter of the lonely desert, daughter of the
lurid waste,
Doubts as dread as thine, in gullies green with
fronds of fern and graced
With the film of falling waters, have been met
and fairly faced.

Deep in dells of hidden sweetness, where the
crested trees are swept
By the skirts of lagging zephyrs, oft a longing
lad has leapt
Down the hillside to the furthest fern-clad
nook—and stood and wept.

Stood, and clenched his fists, and whispered to
his friends of brook and bough,
Hissed the words of hate and anguish, beat
upon his throbbing brow;
Listen to my song, my sister, for that boy is
speaking now.

How I've sat, and gazed, and panted, where the
silver streamlet slips
Past the she-oaks—by the cavern, where the
dewdrop swells and drips!
Thou hast spoken, clear and fearless, words
which struggled to my lips.

Oh! the passion surging upward, yearning for
a word of love,
When the soul cooped up within us fluttered
like a prisoned dove!
Oh! the cruel, cruel heavens, staring coldly
from above!

Oh! the awful days of madness when they told
us "God is good,"
And we walked, and thought, and wondered,
with the wildness of the wood,
Full of doubting dreams and longing for the
touch of brotherhood.

* * * * *

Still we tread the rocky valley, where the
mountains tower high,
Cold, relentless, frowning ever, all unheeding
of our cry,
Be it filled with joy or sorrow—only Echo
makes reply.

DRINKING SONG

E

DRINKING SONG

THE moon is bright on glen an' height,
My heart is wae an' weary;
A tear breaks free frae ilka e'e—
Ye winna be my dearie.

Then, chiels, fill a' your glasses, O,
An' while the bottle passes, O,
We'll drink the bonny lasses, O,
In guid Scotch drink!

I ken that you are fair an' true
An' lovin' til anither;
But I maun be until I dee
A leal an' lovin' brither.

Noo pass the bottle round again,
Until my care is drowned again,
An' I am on the ground again
Wi' guid Scotch drink!

A bardie's soul may surely thole
A lover's common sorrow,
An' aiblins he may chance to see
Anither luve to-morrow.
But keep the bottle going, lads,
An' keep the bumpers flowing, lads;
There's naething for you growing lads
Like guid Scotch drink!

HILL AND DALE

HILL AND DALE

WHILE boyhood yet was young in me, I knew
Of cool and silent glens wherein there grew
Bright ferns, and hillsides where the sudden whirr
Of startled quail was common, and the stir
Of winds forlorn moved slowly through the trees
With long deep sighs, and wings of straying bees
Made murmurous melodies.

Now they have cleared my fairyland—and oft
The crash of old bush heroes marred the soft
And multitudinous quiet, and the ring
Of axes rose where wild birds used to sing

For very joy of sunny days, and then
Rough uncouth huts broke out on hill and glen,
The wretched homes of men.

In those past years I used to wander here
Alone, to seek escape from laugh and sneer
And folly of all kinds that make up man;
I knew a gully where a streamlet ran
Past reeds and over rocks, now swift and strong,
And now slow-whispering secrets in a long
Sweet purl of summer song.

There, in a little grot hung round with fern
And full of dancing echoes from the burn,
I used to hide my clothes, and with a glee
Born of the love of light and liberty
Would leap and caper down the glen, and shout,
And thread the maze of frondage in and out,
And throw my arms about.

Like some young faun I revelled. I would sing
Laugh-broken scraps of melodies, and fling
Myself at length upon the moist warm earth,
Half-mad and drunken with tumultuous mirth,
And watch the white clouds floating in the sky,
And see the black and yellow butterfly
Go softly sailing by.

Oh, those were glad days! when the air was filled
Of music, and the wayward breezes stilled
Their wings and slept with dreams of creek and bird
And fancies that the ear, pressed forward, heard
The fronds of fern uncoiling where the sun
Threw moving golden patterns—finely spun
On sands where ripples run.

Sometimes I sought a rock-pool, and would spring
Into the perfect water-world and fling

Bright drops aloft and watch them darting
through
The shafts of light which pierced the trees that
grew
About my fount, where every leaf between
The shadowed waters and the outer sheen
Was veined with vivid green.

Then would I gaily knock against the trees
And murmur to the fair-haired dryades,
That dwelt, meseemed, within, to come and
dance
Over the fresh-grown grass where dewdrops
glance
With stain of blue and green and orange-
gold—
To play and dally till the grey mist told
That day was growing old.

And that old love is strong within me still;
I feel the longing for the old days thrill

My every fibre, and a strong desire
Burns in my breast like radiant flame of fire,
And makes me curse the fate that I have
found,
The thought to which my lonely hours are
bound,
The awe that wraps them round.

For once, as I went singing down a glade,
A sudden feeling checked me, and I stayed
My swinging steps, my voice died out, and then
In awe-struck mood I left my lonely glen
Nor e'er turned back; and rock and creek and
tree
Saw me no more. I'd fled humanity—
Myself I could not flee.

THE BLACK ART

THE BLACK ART

LET me now conjure up the vision, fair
As day-dawn on the waters; let me sing
A short, slow song of her whose face I bear
This night within my half-closed lids, and wear
Away an idle atom of the Spring.

Ay, let me now devote a dreaming space
To magic (ere I turn myself to sleep),
And gaze again upon the absent face
And eyes, dark brown, with all the heavens' grace,
As awesome, full of meaning, and as deep.

'Tis done! She stands before me, clad with light,
A ray from God's own glory, and I sink
Upon my knees, half dazzled by the sight,
And doubtful if I dream or see aright,
Afraid to move or breathe, afraid to think.

The grace of arms, that move as though they knew
And floated to the music of the spheres;
The hands whose touch would thrill me through
and through;
The eyes where sleeping Love is lurking, true
As Truth, to waken in the waiting years!

That dark, sweet mass of hair; the rounded
cheeks
With brown, ripe tint; the subtle curves of
limb
And waist and breast! And when she laughs
and speaks
She shames the music of the running creeks,
Till all my senses seem to sway and swim.

And, oh, the lips! Twin sirens of desire!
So red and delicate, my blood, I wis,
Pulses with short, strong leaps, and ever higher
Flames up within my breast the fierce, new fire:
I long to drown all feeling in a kiss.

I leap towards her, fling my arms around
A yard of air, and stand a moment there
In wondering folly, while I stare, astound
To lose my self-raised spirit. Then the sound
Of my low laughter shudders through the air.

Oh strange, most strange, to think what dreams are these!
To-morrow some fresh flame will blaze as red
As this; fresh names will whisper through the breeze
As days decay. I brush my dusty knees,
And yawn, and say: "Good night"—and so, to bed.

DREAM—GOLD

DREAM—GOLD

You cannot by a word destroy my right
  Of having that which is my life. Behold,
  You have cast me into a pit, where fiends
    have tolled
A dirge for me and gathered in the night
To show my inner vision vanished light
  Agleam on vanished heaps of gems and
    gold,
  A dazzling world of treasure, wealth untold!
I stretch my arms—it flashes out of sight.

Yet—by the mighty forces that combine
  The universe of atoms—O, my saint!
  You are enshrined within my soul, a quaint

Grotesque unstable tomb, yet music fine
  Breathes ever where you lie, till grey time
    faint
In the stone arms of eternity, mine—mine!

THE END

THE END

It must be so. My dream is at an end,
And sorrow hangs upon me as a cloud
About a mountain peak that towers proud
And stern in cold grey dawnings. Shall I bend,
Like the wild oak when vexed with wind, and send
A plaintive wail to pierce the gloomy shroud
Of misty air ?—be weak, and weep aloud
For that which all my tears may not amend ?

No ! kindest of all cruel tortures,
Dull and half-dead your safe advice appears
Because the blood is surging at my ears

And feverous madness in my being stirs
Until I scarce dare trust myself. And yet
I love you: Is there room, then, for regret?

AFTER

AFTER

A REVELLER at the feast of life was I,
  Full of quaint humours born of sparkling wine,
  Though one grave mood, behind the rest, was
    mine
Even when my wild laughter pierced the sky.

I filled a crystal cup and raised it high;
  A liquor cloudy-green and opaline
  With gleams of crimson—'twas a drink
    divine!
I drank, and cast the empty goblet by.

It made me mad; I thought the hall was fair,
  The arras splendid, and our food the best;
And wondered when they spoke to me of care.

From that brief dream I woke, alone, unblessed

Even by that dread friend men term Despair

I'm weary, and I only long for rest.

"MAIDEN WITH THE MARVELLOUS LUTE"

"MAIDEN WITH THE MARVELLOUS LUTE"

A Dirge

Oh, visionary form!
  Euterpe, maid divine!
  Who lovest on the sunlit sea to shine,
Or revel in the shouting storm—
  How pitiful our Kendall's cry to thee!

* * * *

He clasped thee in his arms and wept aloud
  With sobbing wail of joy, 'mid gleams of glory,
  But, like the hero famed in story,
  His soul at length divined
  That his fierce-clasping arms entwined

No goddess, but a rosy-tinted cloud—
A lovely form indeed, but yet a cloud.
And then he wandered forth,
  But wheresoe'er he went—
  Whether his steps were bent
Towards the fateful South or dreamy North—
The vision that had blessed his eyes
  Had dazzled them to everything;
But that one form—that soul that never dies:
  Still did he give his voice to sing
Thy praise, Euterpe, and the hills that heard
  His voice at eve, upon the breezes borne,
  Caught once again, when woke the morn,
His song, as clear as song of brook or bird,
In modulations born of brook and bird.
And when his voice was stilled
  The wind went whispering by,
  A moaning horror; and a sobbing cry
Was heard in nights of rain, and trees were
    filled

With sighing tales of woe and ruined life,
And hissed words stabbing like a knife.
  Is this the guerdon meted out
To those who love thee with a wealth of
    passion,
And wring their souls in vain attempt to
    fashion
Some words of love to greet thine ears,
Nor mark the multitude that jeers
  Their agony—the fools that flout
  One glorified by light from thee
  And dazed by one sweet strain of melody—
  Drowned deep in blissful pain by hint of
    melody?

* * * *

A SONG OF FRIENDSHIP

A SONG OF FRIENDSHIP

My hand in yours, dear friend,
  I give you words of greeting—
Of friendship without end,
My hand in yours, dear friend,
  My heart with yours in loving music
    beating.

To me amid my grief
  Your darling ways are better
Than dew to faded leaf:
To me amid my grief
  Comes love that makes me evermore your
    debtor.

And fairer than the light
  Upon a sudden shower,
You bless my weary sight,
And fairer than the light
  That breaks upon the night-enfolded flower.

Nor fortune's smiles nor blows
  Our love-locked hearts shall sever;
Though all the world were foes,
Nor fortune's smiles nor blows
  Shall alter me, for ever and for ever.

THE LAST QUEST

THE LAST QUEST

So he spake, the hermit hoary
Crowned with age's peaceful glory,
Spake with calm and measured accents
  To the bold Sir Bedivere,
Bedivere, now bent nigh double
By remorse and silent trouble
Ever gathering upon him
  In the quiet, year by year.

But he scorned the sage's warning,
Saying: "When my manhood's morning
Shone in Arthur's court, good father,
  I was better far than now.

Then I stood erect and cared not
For your gauded beads, and spared not
When I met my foe in battle,
Lance in rest and helm on brow.

"I have sought a grave to rot in.
Peace! it is no better; not in
Feeble wailings in the cloister,
Not in weeds like these and these
Lies salvation for me, father:
I am old, yet I would rather
Fight one fight and die in harness
Than thus babble on my knees.

"Never shines the sun so brightly
On my sloth, as when the knightly
Lists were pitched for fair encounter
In the plain by Camelot.

Have I lost my skill, I wonder;
Once the stoutest faltered under
Spear of mine when firm and certain
Down the flashing way I shot.

"Action—let us stand for action!
I am worse than Modred's faction,
They who fought and never faltered,
Struck and never cared to cease
Till each one of them was lying
Still or groaning, dead or dying;—
Did not Christ once say He brought us
Rather words of war than peace?

"Where is now the joy of battle,
Clash of armour, rush and rattle,
Shock of onset, shout and laughter
Shortly gasped amid the dust,

Brief retreat and sudden rally,
Blare of beams to sound the sally,
Wild encounter, surging, roaring,
Flash of steel in cut and thrust?

"After waiting twenty-seven
Weary years, the path to heaven
Now I see I have mistaken,
Drifting idly on the stream;
I should pull against the flowing
Of the waters; I am going
Down to nothingness, a coward,
Like the phantom of a dream.

"Now farewell to silent sorrow!
Hear me, father: on the morrow,
Ere the lark with falling music
All the misty meadow fills,

I will don my mail, and taking
Spear and shield, when day is breaking
I will bear the load of duty
  Out across the circling hills.

"Perhaps too late the course is chosen,
Now my sluggish blood is frozen
By the frost of age, but gladly
  Thus I shake my shackles free;
I'll no longer rust, and cherish
Weak regrets, but fight and perish
In the cause of right, God willing!
  This is not the place for me."

THE SPARROW-HAWK

THE SPARROW-HAWK

From "MANDEVILLE"

HIGH on a rock by the roaring river,
A castle that well might baulk
The fiercest onset that e'er was made
By robber baron in wayward raid,
Stood frowning down over field and town,
The Hold of the Sparrow-hawk.

For many a mile to the east and west
The hold could well be seen,
But the peasants dreaded it not a whit,
And little the burghers recked of it,
For none dwelt there save a lady fair
That a witch-wife was, I ween.

And a sparrow-hawk in her hall had she,
That never had stretched a wing,
But sat like stone, and mine author writes
That whoso watched it three days and nights
Might have what he would, were it evil or good,
If it were but an earthly thing.

A many came to the tower and watched
And had their will, and found
That small good came of their high success:
They mourned, and thought had they asked for less,
Perchance their joy would not sicken and cloy
When they had their wishes crowned.

When the sun was low on a wet grey day,
A knight to the castle came,
And the damsel greeted him well, and he
Sat late with his eyes on her face, while she

Sang sad love-lays of the olden days
Till his body was all aflame.

At glimmer of dawn he began his task
Of watching the faery bird;
With a voiceless thought and a hope full strong
He watched till the coming of evensong,
And his heart was light when the mirk midnight
In the broad elm branches stirred.

The arras moved to a straying breath
By an opening panel freed,
And either the gay knight idly dreamed,
Or women stood at his back and seemed
To whisper near to his straining ear,
But he laughed and took no heed.

The next day passed, and the dark drew down,
And the midnight hour came round,

And either the stern knight wildly dreamed,
Or the torchlight once upon armour gleamed,
And a sudden clang through the long room rang:
He scowled, but he stood his ground.

The third day went, and the midnight hour
Drew down in stillness dread,
And either the fierce knight madly dreamed,
Or a caitiff cursed and a damsel screamed,
And his breath came fast, but the danger passed,
For he never turned his head.

When the birds 'gan twitter, the lady came:
"There are streaks in the eastern sky,
Now choose your boon." And the knight was fain
Of her lips and arms, and the golden skein
Of her flowing hair, and her cheek so fair,
And curve of her breast and thigh.

"I have great store of the good red gold,
My lands are broad and fine,
And I fear no foe; but my boon is this,
I will have the fire of your lips to kiss,
On your heaving breast I will seek my rest,
And your body shall cling to mine."

"Take heed, take heed, thou heedless knight!
Such a wish as thine may bring
Shame to thy house, and woe, and scorn,
For knowest thou not I am faery born?
Seek not thy bane, but choose again,
And crave an earthly thing."

"Dear heart, I have seen thy deep dark eyes!
I have heard thy clear voice sing,
And it sang of death and of love's sweet lore!
I have touched thy hand, and I long for more,
Thy golden hair and thy breasts half bare—
So I ask no other thing."

"No longer tarry, but get thee gone
To thy wife and children three;
For thy lewd desires and thy words so brave
I shall give thee a gift that thou dost not crave,
For thy sons ill-fame, for thy daughter shame,
And an infamous death for thee."

The woods were glad with the warm sunshine,
The mavis thrilled the air,
When the knight rode forth from the castle gate,
His head sunk down with his sorrow's weight;
His eyes were dim with his future grim,
And glazed with a dull despair.

STORM

STORM

Like a ship shuddering along the sea
  When dark-grey clouds fly shredding in the rack,
  And far away a huge bank clambers black
Above the horizon, rumbling terribly,
And all men wonder what the end will be,
  Flung heavenward and rushing headlong back
  Into the depth, while all the foamy track
Hisses and roars and shouts in deadly glee;

So now I fly before my thoughts and find
No haven, and my spirit vainly broods
On life and death, now hurled by hope on high
With strange exultant laughter, straight declined
Into the gloom of dull despondent moods—
But yet I know God's sun is in the sky.

FOR MY SISTER

FOR MY SISTER

STRONGER by far than kinship's casual tie
  Is that strong bond of friendship that unites
  Two hearts in mutual trust, till each delights
To rest upon the other; each will cry
Its hopes and fears, as certain of reply
  As one of echoes by the frowning heights
  Of mountain walls and gorges when the night's
Soft voice of peace is hushed expectantly:

And so we stand together, you and I,
  For you are good to me, and there are few
  More dear to me in grief or joy than you,
And few hold fast my thoughts while you are by.

Then, sister, thus in soul I humbly bend
And greet you by the sacred name of
Friend.

SERENADE

SERENADE

The sky is icy blue, love,
  The pale stars coldly shine;
Chill creeps the drenching dew, love,
  About this form of mine;
But my heart is warm and true, love,
  And my heart and soul are thine—
  My heart and soul are thine!

Dead leaves and hopes are strewn, love,
  On the summer's mournful bier,
For the wintry soul of June, love,
  Now clips the shivering year;
But I scorn her wild sad tune, love,
  For I know that thou art near—
  I know that thou art near!

A fainting wind now calls, love,
  The leaves from the sighing tree,
And each as it rustling falls, love,
  Seems hissing "Beware!" to me;
But I gaze at the silent walls, love,
  And I know that they harbour thee—
  I know that they harbour thee!

THE PRESENCE OF THE BUSH

THE PRESENCE OF THE BUSH

In lonely gullies and secluded dells,
And on the rocky hills and by the
river,
I've whispered many a time
Soft secrets to the wind that never tells,
And many a fairy rhyme
I've learnt where shade and light together
quiver.

But all too weak am I to tell the tale
The spirits of the sweet bush murmur to
me;
I strive, but all in vain,

To sing the songs of wonderland—I fail
To give the notes again
  That like a wave of joy thrill through and
    through me.

The city has no pleasures like to these;
  In cramping walls the wind through crannies
    hisses
A curse of rankling hate,
But here it whispers love to all the trees,
And tinkling brooklets sate
  Their laughing souls in melodies of kisses.

And birds are here, and blossoms with a scent
  Of summer and the beauty of a dream;
But I am dazed, and though
My heart is full of music merged and blent
In streams of sound, I know
  The light I bring from them is but a gleam.

And I am lapped in glory, and I long
  For strength to share my joy with friend
    and foe;
Ah, friends! ah, brothers mine!
If I could blend my longings in a song,
As grapes are crushed in wine,
  You might hear words would make your
    spirits glow.

THE PICTURE

THE PICTURE

MISTER! I'm in want o' money; give me some
—I won't say "please."
You've got plenty; I've got nothing, an' it
isn't altogether
Through my fault that I'm here loafin', like a
scarecrow—Look at these—
Bet yer hat I didn't mean to choose these rags
for rainy weather.
I don't cringe an' beg yer money on the common
dead-beat plan,
But I stop and claim it from yer as a right
from man to man.

See my hands! They're rough with labour, but
I won't bow down an' whine
Just because I'm almost starvin'; I won't work
upon yer feelin',
With a yarn to make yer give me what my
manhood says is mine.
Damn yer eyes I'd rather steal it—if yer like to
call it stealin'.
Why should you have fancy dinners till the
starvin' poor are fed?
You've no right to jam an' treacle while a
brother starves for bread!

Why should I be poor an' ragged, while such
fools as—that 'un there,
With his straw hat, strut and gabble, full o'
scorn, an' neat an' stately,
Thinkin' all the girls is runnin' after 'im? Now,
is it fair?—

Don't you lean agin' the railins'; they've been
paintin' of 'em lately—
Like enough, he's tight an' spendin' tin on some
unholy lark,
On the nights when, tired an' hungry, I'm
a-dossin' in the Park.

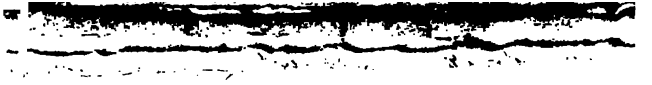
. . . . Earned it? . . . . Look across the road,
now—that way!—what d'yer think o'
that?
See the kid, the little gal there, dirty, dabblin'
in the gutter,
Splashin' round a stinkin' puddle by the carcass
of a cat!
Does that sort o' picture help to enjoy yer
bread an' butter?
'Taint her fault, I tell yer, mister, that's the life
that she endures,
But while you are still and silent, maybe part
of it is yours.

She don't have a chance, I tell yer! If she
isn't dead before,
What'll be her fate, poor devil, when she's
eight or nine years older?
She'll be beggin' in the street, sir, beggin' like
a common whore,
In the slavery to which your nineteenth century
has sold her;
That's what's wrong! The blasted system
pampers you an' crushes me;
'Elp to alter the conditions. Curse yer bloody
charity!

Thanks! Shake hands! I see you fancy I'm
a little off my head.
But a better time is comin', an' it won't be so
much longer
As the Fat Man thinks before the worker claims
an' eats the bread

That he earns by honest labour; for the cause
is growin' stronger.
I'll give you yer money's value—picture of a
beggar brat
Playin' in a filthy gutter with a putrifyin' cat!

FULFILMENT



FULFILMENT

LIKE a bird cheered with sunshine after rain,
My soul pants joyous music, and is glad
Of your sweet presence, dear, since I have had
Assurance of your love, and all the pain
Of strange past folly ne'er must come again
To dim those eyes or make your spirit sad;
What matter both have been so blindly mad?
We see each other's eyes—and we are sane.

Time passes: seize the present moment, dear;
Cling fast!—I love you—let us take our fill
Of pleasure! Let us live our lives, and still
Banish from out our hearts the bitter fear!

Borne on the surge of passion's waves, at
last
Let us forget the miserable past!

SONNET

SONNET

Oh! that swift words of fire might leave my pen
Like lightning on a stormy midnight sky,
That all the moods that love and hate supply
Might be expressed to move the minds of men
As wind among the branches, that the glen
Might lend its sweetness, and the mountains high
Their melancholy awe, and the long sigh
Of summer-tide its peace, for surely then

My songs would ring sweet chimes in noble ears
And fill the listening world with melody
Till every land would quiver at my fame
And treasure it through dark and shining years;
Then would all nations learn to worship thee,
Dear love, and bow at mention of thy name.

ROUGE ET NOIR

ROUGE ET NOIR

WHY should I be thus shaken by a dream,
Than which a baby's babble has more meaning,
Unless the tedious thoughts that I have traced
Of late to where they lose themselves in the sea
Have wronged my sense? And that my friendship, too,
Should lay the spell on me To think that love
Like mine should send a clap of misery
To cling upon me like a shadowy plague
That baffles grappling!
Under a sloping roof
Of twining branches, as I thought, I lay
And read, and in among the perfect green

Of new-burst leaves the sunlight pierced and
threw
Round splashes of lilac colour on the book,
Twinned circles wavering to the sleepy sigh
Of noontide, and the gladioles were stirred
To half-heard rustlings in their yellowing
blades
And light seed-bearing wands; the lizard
sunned
His grace of bronze beside the crisping leaves
That the last storm had torn from the trees;
afar
The steam-boat panted on the river. While
I lay with fettered senses, lazily
Following Gautama's golden words and deeds,
I heard a sound of slowly-wending feet
Approaching, so I rose and thrust apart
The boughs and looked; a sad-faced company
Of men and maids and children walked
adown

The hillside with its rust of perished ferns,
And each of them was clad in spotless white
And crowned with faded leaves, and in their midst
Four young men bare a coffin, over which
Was spread a blood-red pall. There as they went
The shrubs and flowers drooped behind them. Then
With reverent head I stood, and while they passed
I plucked the hindmost by the sleeve to ask
Whose body lay beneath yon crimson pall;
For answer came two whispered words that struck
My soul to dulness, but I watched them go,
With one thought in my heart, and on my lips
One single phrase—"He was my friend, my friend!"

Before the words had died away, the bush
Had vanished, but the thought remained unchanged.

Now I was in my sleeping-room, and there
With a keen knife I pierced a purple vein
Within my arm, and lay awaiting death,
And listening to the dripping of the blood
That redly marked the passing time. I heard
The bees at work in the blossoming tree before
My window, and I heard a lumbering cart
Toil up the road with picnickers, and still
My blood flowed and my strength ebbed, but I thought
Of him, the boy I loved, and was content
To die, for we might meet beyond the bourne,
Or, though we met not, dreamless sleep were better
Than waking misery. A distant clock
Tolled out the hour, and a cow lowed far away,

And farther still it seemed to me, my ears
Being blunted so that the sound of ruddy drops
Scarce entered, and my strength was almost null;
All will or power to move had faded out,
Till I was ripe for the end. Then suddenly
Before the darkness fell I heard a laugh
Out in the sunshine, and my name was cried
In joyous tones; his foot scattered the gravel
As he ran through the garden, but I lay
Powerless, and the horror beats amain
At my temples as I write; I crushed my force
Into a single knot for one last cry,
To shout his name, and, with the effort, woke.

WE MEET

WE MEET

I TOUCHED you as I passed you in the street
  And for one moment looked you in the eyes—
Dark eyes and restful, sweet,
  But full of baffled wonder and surmise;
  I think you saw within my soul arise
The mad desire to perish at your feet.

A vague remembrance of some awful pain
  Down the dark slopes of some forgotten age
Beat loudly in my brain,
  And love that death himself could not
    assuage
  Sang in a tone unknown to fool or sage.
We passed, and we may never meet again.

THE UNFADING VISION

THE UNFADING VISION

HERE! 'twas here I sat that morning, change
hath never set her feet
On this heap of rocky wildness where the
gurgling waters meet—
Meet and sing and dance together, nodding to
the thirsty tract,
Leap and laugh and hurry onward to the
roaring cataract;
Down the darkly-frowning gorges, past the
crouching, twisted trees,
Seeking other streams that saunter slowly to
the distant seas.
Here I sat and watched the breezes scud along
the dark hillside.

Where across the stunted grasses ghostly
shadows sweep and glide,
And the darkness mounts at even from the glen
with stealthy stride.

But I dreamed and saw before me, shining on
the beaming hills,
Forms that smiled and beckoned upward, and
their brightness thrilled, and thrills
All my being, and the runnels of my blood were
charged with fire,
Till my soul was as a furnace of insatiable
desire,
And I rose to leave the twilight of the place
where doubtful sheen
Blotched the rocks that flanked the gully,
gazing longingly between:
But methought the glade beneath me, glooming
upward from below,

Echoed round with human echoes, shouts of
hate and shrieks of woe,
Till a mighty horror bound me—chained me—
and I could not go.

Then I wept, and cried: "My brothers, leave
the harbourage of night,
Cease your strife and sorrow, brothers, clamber
upward to the light,
Let us mount together, brothers!" but the
clash of strife alone
Rang upon the air and rent it, shriek and sob
and curse and groan,
And the shining heights above me stood with
glittering peak and spire
Where the glorious shapes were calling, clad in
robes of opal fire.
"Mystic maiden," then I murmured, "thou,
and thou alone, canst save!

Soul of love and music, teach me how to follow
with the brave,
Come as thou didst come to help me weeping
on a comrade's grave."

Lo! a voice like flowers breathing all their
souls upon the air
Answered: "I am here to help you—here to
comfort your despair."
There she stood in all her beauty, smiling,
graceful, fair, and warm,
And her fragrant hair was softly floating
round her shapely form;
So I bent in supplication: "Help!" I cried,
"the kindly skies
Nestle down upon the hill-tops and the spirits
cry 'Arise!'
But this hell that seethes around me holds me
here, and all in vain

Wing my cries—they will not hear me! are
they wedded to their pain?
Here behold the gloom I flee from, there the
glamour I would gain."

Then a sorrow, sinking through her, deepened
in her pensive eyes,
As she answered low: "I see them, and I
hear the grating cries
Rising from the chaos; never may you gain
the heights above,
Downward, downward to the darkness, follow
in the steps of Love."
And she stepped amid the tumult, bringing
peace and bringing light,
So I followed—but above me hung the summits
glowing bright.
Oh! I longed for space to live in, open skies
and spreading view,

Meadows stretching to the distance, fair with
grass and gleaming dew;
But the gloomy valley hoarded greater treasure
than I knew.

There the maiden dwelt for ever, and I bowed
before her will,
And her very presence, somehow, seemed insen-
sibly to fill
Every spot with light and pleasance, and I
followed her and trod
In her footsteps, and I worshipped her as
Christians worship God—
She was life to me; and after, when I thought
upon the heights
That were glinting, gleaming, glowing with
their opalescent lights,
Back I turned to other fancies of a maiden
past compare,

Of a maiden clad in beauty and a wealth of
flowing hair,
Of a maiden ever youthful—and I ridiculed
Despair.

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